IV. The Dewan opened the Assembly with the following.—

ADDRESS.

"*Gentlemen,*

PRELIMINARY.

Under command of His Highness the Maha Raja, it is my pleasing duty to welcome you to the Fifteenth Session of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly. Copies of the Administration Report for 1093 M. E. will, as usual, be placed in your hands, from which you will learn in detail how the administration of the State was conducted during the year.

2. Personnel.—Since the last Session of the Assembly, there have been some important changes in the higher ranks of the public service, and foremost among them, I should mention the retirement of Mr. A. H. Bastow, Chief Engineer and of Mr. A. J. Vieyra, Chief Secretary to Government. For the past few years, the health of Mr. Bastow was not of the best ; but undeterred by any considerations on that account, he stood at his post of duty and served the State as Chief Engineer for a period of thirteen years with an ability, integrity and devotion to duty, which always elicited the warm appreciation of Government. Mr. Vieyra retired after a long and meritorious service of more than 37 years. His vast experience, unswerving loyalty and facile penmanship were valuable assets, and the State has lost in him a ripe, ready and reliable officer. Mr. S. Ramaswami Sastri, District and Sessions Judge, has also retired after a long career of public usefulness. The death of Professor A. R. Rajaraja Varma in June last has cast a shadow over the service. The late professor was one of the most distinguished orientalists of modern times. His numerous works in Sanskrit and Malayalam bear the unmistakable stamp of genius, and his unexpected loss to the local Arts College, of which he was one of the most shining ornaments, is irreparable. Death has also snatched away from our midst Mr. K. Paramu Pillai, the popular Professor of English in the College.

3. The War.—The great war of liberation has been fought and won. The day-dream of the despot has been dispelled for ever, and Germany lies prostrate to-day at the feet of her victors, crushed with the weight of her own countless sins. The cause of justice, humanity and righteousness has completely triumphed and the world is once more free by the indisputable dominance of right over might. Great Britain, the stalwart champion of order and progress in every age, has emerged out of this struggle even a greater Britain than before and the event is full of moral lessons to the student of history.

4. War effort.—In regard to the contribution of men and money for the war, I may be permitted to say that Travancore has not failed to make its humble response to the call of duty. At the very commencement of the war, His Highness the Maha Raja placed all the resources of the State at the disposal of His Majesty the King-Emperor, and at a later stage when the tension of the conflict became severe, exhorted his subjects in a soul-stirring message to help the cause of the Empire to the utmost limit of their capacity. His Highness himself led the way by contributing liberally to the war loans and the war funds. His noble precepts and example naturally had their salutary effect and it gives me great pleasure to acknowledge that the people of Travancore have cheerfully come forward to bear their share of the burden. Their contributions for war purposes and investments in war bonds have not in any degree been disproportionate to their resources. In the matter of recruitment to the Indian Army, the results attained have been in every way satisfactory. Several concessions were granted to intending recruits, and during the eleven months from January to November 1918, when alone recruiting operations were carried on in the State through the Darbar's agency, a contribution of 1,596 combatant and 1,422 non-combatant recruits was made to His Majesty's Forces. The men of the Nayar Brigade who joined the 73rd Infantry, Trichinopoly, acquitted themselves honourably and the officer commanding the regiment has expressed himself highly satisfied with their work. Two of the Division Peishkars have been awarded certificates by His Excellency the Viceroy for meritorious work done in connection with the first war loan propaganda.

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Sadhujana Paripalana Sangham, it was found on enquiry that a large portion of it was in the occupation of members of other classes, and such portion was accordingly directed to be registered in the names of the respective occupants. The remaining area has been ordered to be registered in favour of the members of the Sadhujana Paripalana Sangham, and the Senior Dewan Peishkar, Trivandrum, has been asked to report whether unoccupied lands could not be found in the Neyyattinkara or Nedumangad taluk for assignment to the members of the Sangham to make up the balance. The Deputy Tahsildar, Neyyattinkara, has been ordered to carry out the work of registry expeditiously. A similar measure of relief has been afforded to the Kanikars, who are the most important among the Hill tribes of Travancore. Sanction has been accorded to lands outside the reserved forests being registered in their names free of *tharavila* and all arrears of tax.

10. Survey.—The resurvey of the Nedumangad taluk was completed and the final records were supplied to the Revenue Department. The area brought under re-survey was 217·8 square miles and the total cost Rs. 1,47,407, giving an average of Rs. 677 per square mile. A new Survey school was opened at Kottayam in addition to the Central Survey school at Trivandrum.

11. Forests.—The total area of re-served forests at the end of 1093 was 2,383 square miles and 117 acres, and of reserved lands 77 square miles and 50 acres. In view to the expeditious disposal of the large volume of Forest Settlement work still remaining to be done, Government have appointed a Special Forest Settlement Peishkar for one year with effect from the 10th Chingam, 1094. Including a simple working scheme for one of the circles, regular working plans have till now been sanctioned for an area of 673 square miles and 210 acres. An additional area of 388 acres was newly planted with teak and the existing plantations covering an area of 4,103 acres were properly maintained. The policy of restricting the exploitation of royal timber from the reserved forests was persisted in. The balance stock at the sale depôts was brought to a minimum. The tentative measure originally sanctioned and subsequently extended for the abolition of export duty on timber, firewood and charcoal, was further extended for another period of five years. The gross revenue rose from Rs. 14,75,347 in 1092 to Rs. 15,15,293 in 1093 and the net revenue from Rs. 6,25,609 to Rs. 8,64,955. The large increase in the net revenue was mainly due to the extension of the system of coupe-sales in the Northern and Shencottah Divisions. This system, I may say, is not the unmixed evil that it is often represented to be. Under adequate safeguards and subject to the proper supervision of the purchaser's operations, it is an easy and effective source of revenue. The net revenue of the Department in 1087 was only Rs. 2,83,383 and it is a matter for congratulation that it has more than trebled itself during the last six years. Government take this opportunity of recording their appreciation of the good work done by Mr. V. Subrahmanya Aiyar, Conservator of Forests.

12. Salt.—The area actually worked as salt pans rose from 301 to 355 acres. Prompt steps are being taken to bring the balance of the available area also under cultivation. The production of home salt fell, owing to untimely rains, from 4,83,843 maunds to 3,74,983 maunds. I note with pleasure that the consumption in 1093 increased by 44,928 maunds, the average consumption per head of population rising from 24·3 lbs. to 26·1 lbs.

13. Excise.—The consumption of country liquor fell from 1,05,793 proof gallons to 95,122 proof gallons, giving an average of 1·3 drams per head of population. The number of licenses issued for tapping cocoanut and palmyra trees for toddy, also showed an appreciable decline, while the quantity of foreign liquor imported into the State fell by 7,488 gallons or as much as 37·9 per cent. The sale prices of opium and ganja were increased.

PROTECTION.

14. Legislation.—Two Regulations were passed by the Legislative Council during 1093, *viz.*, Regulation I of 1093 to amend the Press Regulation and Regulation II of 1093 to amend the Cattle Trespass Regulation. Two Regulations

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